occurred in large numbers, I had an opportunity of examining a great many of them with various results. In one instance, I found a dead worm coiled up; in another, a portion of a worm protruding into the lower part of the tube. Again, *nidi* were found partially filled with only the casts of worms, whilst others contained more or less of a species of Conferva; and, lastly, I obtained some with the cavities partially or wholly filled up. The receptacles varied in shape, from a sphere to an oval, and were extremely thin and fragile. They also varied in size from a pea to a nut. Externally they presented an appearance so singularly contorted, that I could not help considering they were moulded from the casts of worms. They did not appear to have any attachment to the surrounding clay, except at the point of junction with the tube; and the clay beneath them presented no unusual appearance.

Internally they generally exhibited impressions of the worm; but occasionally I detected some of the round and contorted appearances which I have mentioned as being so conspicuous on the outside. I cannot speak with precision as to the length of the tubes, as the clay when examined had been broken up into large rough masses in digging for the foundations of houses. The largest noticed was about three inches long, and the general width one-eighth of an inch. They often run parallel to each other, but at unequal distances. I now have to notice what I consider a remarkable circumstance, namely, that all the tubes contained a solid cylinder of clay, and in every instance where the worms occurred under the circumstances above recorded, they were found to be dead. Researches of this kind are calculated to throw a light on some of those singular phenomena which geologists occasionally meet with in the older rocks.

[*Mem.*—Several specimens of clay, containing the worm-tubes as above described, were exhibited to the meeting.]

Natural History—Extracts from the Journal of Captain Denham, H.M. Surveying Vessel 'Herald,' 1857. Communicated by Captain Washington, through the Secretary.

[Read June 3rd, 1858.]

We found upon the larger islands the small species of the Kangaroo, bearing the native name Wallaby (*Halmaturus Billar-*

dierii), which, when mixed with other meats, affords a fine-flavoured soup.

On the islets are flocks of the Cape Banca goose, which Mr. Smith informed me were only to be found in these straits in the vicinity of Flinders Island, from Cape Banca to Cape Frankland (west about), and that they are readily domesticated, and hatch from three to seven eggs, and afford an acceptable dish. I obtained a live specimen, which Dr. Rayner of this ship describes thus:—"*Cereopsis Novæ Hollandiæ.* Body about the size of a common goose; bill short, vaulted, obtuse, two-thirds of which is covered by an expanded cere of a pale greenish-yellow colour, the tip of the bill being black, arcuated, and truncated. Nostrils large, round, open, and situated in the middle of the bill. Wings ample, third quill longest. Legs long, light dull-red, and naked to a little above the knee. Feet black, webbed, the membrane being deeply notched, great toe articulated to the metatarsus. Plumage slate-grey, with black spots upon the wings and back. Wing-feathers dusky black, and edged at the tip with pale grey. Irides light hazel."

We likewise obtained specimens of the following wildfowl:—

AVES.

A BRONZE-WING PIGEON,	Phaps elegans.
QUAIL,	Corturnix pectoralis (*Gould*).
OYSTER-CATCHER,	Hæmatophus fuliginosus.
RING PLOVER,	Hiaticula bicincta.
WILD DUCK,	Anas punctata (*Cuvier*).
GREAT GULL,	Larus pacificus.
LESSER GULL,	Xema Jamesonii.
MUTTON BIRD,	Puffinus brevicaudus (*Brandt*).
SOUTHERN GANNET,	Sulu australis (*Gould*).
SMALL PENGUIN,	Spheniscus minor (*Temminck*).

The Mutton Bird we observed streaming from island to island; and I learnt from Mr. Benvenuto Smith the following particulars of its habits from his own observations.

The male birds come in from sea in the month of September, and prepare the burrows for the reception of the hens. The hen bird does not make her appearance till about the 25th November, when she lays and sits at once.

The Mutton Bird lays but one egg; they are employed rearing the young bird until the month of May, at which time the old birds leave the young ones to shift for themselves; the young birds remain in the burrows till they are starved down, and then set off to sea, and are not seen again amongst the islands till September. The cock and hen sit alternately night and day; and all the labour of providing for the young is equally shared.

There are at this date about ninety people living on the small islands in "Franklin Inlet" who make a livelihood by gathering the oil, feathers, and eggs of the Mutton Bird.

Upwards of 2000 gallons of the oil are extracted from the birds annually; and although 300,000 birds are known to be destroyed each year, they appear undiminished in numbers. The oil burns well, and is of a bright-red colour.

I was presented by Mr. Smith with two Paper Nautilus shells (*Argonauta tuberculosa*) found on the shore of Flinders Island this season, a circumstance which he has remarked occurs but every seventh year, when many hundreds are thrown up: the shells are rarely obtained perfect, as they are extremely fragile, and the sea fowl pick the fish out of them.

Our Botanic Collector, Mr. Milne, ascertained, from what he obtained himself and from what we could contribute from our individual visits to the islets, the existence of plants, which he believes to be indigenous, belonging to the following families and genera, viz.

Amentaceæ.
Asteraceæ.
Rosaceæ.
Geraniaceæ.
Euphorbiaceæ.
Myrtaceæ.
Umbelliferæ.
Graminaceæ.
Junceæ.
Solanum.
Geranium.

Testing the chances of fish refreshment at this anchorage, we found little encouragement for hook and line; but the two favouring opportunities which the weather allowed for hawling the seine produced as tabulated on opposite page.

We found the Reef Islands in this sound so abundant in rabbits since Captain Stokes's forethought had set some loose upon them, that, in two visits of four hours with but four guns, 100 brace were brought on board.

I took care to follow my esteemed brother officers' example and the system of introducing such productions, and obtained a dozen couple alive for letting loose in Shark Bay.

[A coloured drawing of *Cereopsis Novæ Hollandiæ* accompanied Captain Denham's observations.]

Locality.	How many hawls and phase of ○.	Trawl-seine, or hook and line.		Natural History Names.	Common Names.	No. of sorts.	Pounds weight.
		Depth of water.	Nature of bottom.				
West side	6 hawls	with seine.		Mugil	Mullet	23	28
Flinders Isl.	... ...	½	... ...	Hemiramphus	Gar-fish	10	5
Settlement	○	1 fathom	Sand	Platycephalus	Flat-head, small	3	1
Bay	14 days	on	and	Raia	Sting Ray	2	29
H.W.F. & C.☽ X. 30.	... ...	a flat	weed	Iulis	Small fish of the Basse family	Several	...
Range 10 ft.	L.W.	... ...	... ...	Labrax	Basse	1	1
East side of	7 hawls	with seine (mar.).		Myliobatis	Ray	11	375
Hummock	☽	... ...	... ...	Mugil	Mullet	20	30
Island centre	26 days	1 to 3 fams.	Sandy beach	Platycephalus	Flat-head	3	2
				Siphyracua	Barracouta	1	1
Bay	at ¾ flood	... ...	... ...	Scomberesox	Saury	27	17
				Sepioteuthis	Cuttle-fish	Several	...
					Total	...	489